Temperance - 1931

Common Sense
Superior, Wis.
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FORMER SENATOR FLAYS DRY LAW

Says Government Finances Speakeasies and Stills While Concealing Official Corruption.

(Condensed from an article by former U. S. senator, James A. Reed of Missouri, in Hearst's International for September).

I indict the federal government for setting up and operating Negro speak-easies, with Negro spies, under the direction of drunken prohibition agents, to bribe and entrap policemen, sheriffs and other state officers, for the purpose of "jamming" them to prison.

In 1926, I introduced a resolution directing the secretary of the treasury to submit to the senate a full report on the operations of so-called "undercover" prohibition enforcement agents. The documents submitted by Secretary Mellon reveal one of the most outrageously unlawful chapters in the history of attempted prohibition enforcement, including in detail the operation of a rum-smuggling and rumrunning enterprise in northern New York, and the operation of speak-easies and stills in southern Virginia and eastern North Carolina.

In northern New York federal prohibition agents were instructed and directed by Judge Frank Cooper of the United States district court of northern New York, with the approval of the state and federal prohibition directors, to engage in rum-smuggling and rumrunning. Agents were provided with money, out of the federal treasury, and an automobile, with which to go into Canada, buy liquor, bring it into the United States and sell it to bootleggers in the vicinity of Troy and Albany.

These operations involved the violation not only of the 18th amendment and the national prohibition act, but also the customs law. They further constituted a flagrant and willful conspiracy to violate the national prohibition law, and rendered not only the officers and agents but the federal judge who participated with them, liable to prosecution for their acts.

GOVERNMENT WHIST CLUB

Again, a notorious bridge-whist club in New York City, where liquor abounded, was operated by prohibition agents with the approval of a federal district judge at a cost of $5,576.50 of the taxpayers' money, over and above the profits from the drinks sold.

The undercover operations of the prohibition bureau in Norfolk, Virginia, and vicinity, violated every law of decency and morals, as well as the statutory laws. They, as the documents disclose, were instigated by J. W. Hough, a director of the Virginia Anti-Saloon league. He made complaint against the Norfolk police officers to the federal prohibition bureau in Washington, and agents sent from Washington took instructions from him. He furnished money to the agents to buy liquor, and stored it in his own safe. These agents without delay established a Negro speak-easy in a remodeled stable and employed a Negro bartender and a criminal to help them operate it.

The object of these operations was to bribe policemen, or as the enthusiastic prohibition agent assigned to the task, reporting to his superior officer, very aptly said, everything was ready to "jam the cops for conspiracy."

The agent in charge of this investigation, Leighton H. Blood, was assisted by D. D. Mayne. I quote from one of Mayne's reports to his superior officer in Washington:

"Last evening in company with Investigator Blood, I visited the premises operated by Investigator Blood at 1223 Chapel street. I found everything operating — pool tables, bar and lunch counter, and several colored patrons were at the bar where the bartender and Investigator Blood were dispensing "white mule," or, as they call it here, corn liquor."

OFFICIAL STILLS IN OLD VIRGINIA

Investigator Mayne also set up stills in Virginia and North Carolina, employing Negro spies to operate them, in order to bribe sheriffs, deputy sheriffs and constables, and thus obtain evidence with which to indict for conspiracy to violate the national prohibition law. It was a magnificent piece of work, resulting in the wholesale dismissal of police officers of the city of Norfolk. Yet it is plain from the letters that the federal government, hardened slimy with bribery, its soiled linen permeated with the aroma of its own speak-easies and stills, and breath reeking of its own poisonous hooch, was in no condition to reel into a court of law, companioned by its Negro spies and criminal informers, and there hiccup out a public accusation.

If the federal prohibition bureau, by resorting to such despicable and disgraceful methods, could entrap policemen and bootleggers in the violation of the prohibition law, and induce them to plead guilty and accept sentence, it was a splendid piece of work, in keeping with the spirit and nobility of the prohibition law, and worthy of the high encomium of both the prohibition department and the Anti-Saloon league. But under no circumstances should these facts be exposed in open court, or in the presence of a jury!

With the records of the undercover activities of the prohibition bureau in the hands of the United States senate, and printed as Senate Document No. 198 of the second session of the sixty-eighth congress, the treasury department denounced these practices. It decided to fumigate itself.

However, immediately upon the transfer of the prohibition bureau from the treasury department to the department of justice, we have a record of similar operations. The prohibition unit was transferred to the department of justice July 1, 1930. By September, 1930, we find a Negro speak-easy, also operated by criminals, in full swing at Indianapolis, and again set up by prohibition agents to trap policemen.

On the floor of the house, January 6, 1931, Representative J. Charles Linthicum of Maryland, described this government speak easy:

". . . Prohibition operators, in cooperation with the district attorney of Indianapolis, deliberately set about to build up a sensational police scandal by the establishment of a speak-easy in that city . . . two prohibition agents, sent to Indianapolis from Chicago, opened a liquor-dispensing establishment at 1213 East 22nd street. Government funds were used to finance this illegal venture . . . Horace Lyle, a Negro informer, was in charge . . . and the two federal agents supplied the liquor through Taylor, a notorious bootlegger, who vanished before the trial. Another informer, one Henderson, was at the time a fugitive from justice."

The establishment of this speak-easy was admitted by Prohibition Director Woodcock in a letter to Congressman Linthicum. The methods employed were so outrageous that they were sharply denounced by Judge Robert C. Baltzell, noted for his severity in dealing out punishment in liquor cases. Notwithstanding the crooked methods employed, several policemen were convicted upon the evidence and sentenced to the penitentiary.

For 10 years the federal government has been pleading with state officials and members of local police departments to take over the burden of prohibition enforcement. But it resorts to the lowest and most despicable criminal methods known to the human race to entrap these local officers and have them railroaded to jail.

BARS ON UNCLE SAM'S VESSELS

Uncle Sam has also engaged in other bootlegging enterprises, more respectable, perhaps, but none the less flagrantly unlawful.

In the fifth month of the administration of President Harding, official instruction was issued to stock with liquor all of those ships acquired during and after the World war and owned by the United States, whether operated by the United States shipping board or leased to operating lines, in order, by offering such liquor for sale on board, to attract passengers to them. The shipping board was losing something like $150,000,000 a year, and by setting up the drinks, it was sought to reduce this loss by $100,000,000 a year.

It was this prize of $100,000,000 a year that the federal government was trying to win by violation of the prohibition law at sea while enforcing the law against its citizens on land at home. The government's motive was identical with that of any other bootlegger — to make money.

This official bootlegging enterprise was launched upon the seven seas when Roy A. Haynes was nominally prohibition commissioner, having been appointed by Wayne B. Wheeler, chief lobbyist of the Anti-Saloon league. We learn, however, from the records of the Anti-Saloon league and the biography of Mr. Wheeler that the actual prohibition commission, although without official authority, was Mr. Wheeler himself.

On one liner alone the United States owned and operated five saloons. Its wine list included 10 thousands of champagne; nine of red and white Bordeaux wines; nine of red and white Burgundy; seven of Rhine wines; five of Moselle wines; five of vermuth, port and sherry, and 27 varities of spirits and liqueurs, including "old American rye moonshine" at 30 cents a pony.

This went on for nearly a year without exposure, and even then, the shipping board defended the practice strongly. In November, 1922, the United States supreme court decided that these maritime bootlegging operations violated both the 18th amendment and the national prohibition law. The supreme court also held that it was equally illegal for any ship to transport liquor into, or to possess liquor within, the territorial waters of the United States.

The ocean was temporarily dried up. The great passenger fleets of

Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy could not enter the ports of the United States with any liquor for beverage use. They could sell legally on their west-bound voyages but upon reaching the three-mile limit they had to dump the supplies into the sea, and consequently the return voyage was dry.

BOOZE TREATIES AGAINST IDEA

Notwithstanding this decision, the United States proceeded to enter into treaties with many foreign governments which granted the latter the right to transport and to possess intoxicating liquors while in the territorial waters of the United States.

The first of these treaties was proposed by Charles Evans Hughes, now chief justice of the supreme court of the United States, then secretary of state. They were ratified by the United States senate, with the united support of the drys, and approved by President Coolidge.

As a concession for this grant the United States obtained the right to search any vessel of any treaty nation within an hour's sailing from the American coast line.

GOVERNMENT FINANCES SCHEME

I indict the federal government for its indefensible $20,000,000 subsidy to the California grape growers and grape-concentrate manufacturers, with full knowledge that the grapes and grape concentrates are being manufactured into 12 to 20 per cent wines and champagnes in the homes in quantities more than three times as great as all the wine production of the United States before prohibition, when, at the same time, the government is spending $50,000,000 a year and losing revenues of more than $500,000,000 a year by prosecuting every other person it can lay its hands upon for the manufacture of any beverage containing as much as one-half of one per cent of alcohol.

It seems absolutely impossible for the federal government to keep out of the bootlegging business. However, it remained for the administration of Herbert Hoover to finance the business as a nation-wide project, with the taxpayers' money. One of the early official acts of President Hoover was to call a special session of congress to pass a farm relief bill which authorized the federal farm board, under certain conditions, to extend financial help to needy farmers.

The first group of "farmers" to claim attention of the board was the California grape growers. Loans were made by it, up to January 19, 1931, totaling $19,187,622.07, to the California grape control board, which ships every year 80,000 cars of grapes available for home wine-making. Of this sum, $2,555,330 was lent directly to Fruit Industries, Ltd., whose principal business is the production and sale of grape concentrates for the sure and easy manufacture of wines and champagnes containing 12 to 20 per cent of alcohol.

OPERATE UNDER STATE LAWS

I indict the federal government for representing to the American people that it faithfully observes the constitution and the laws in the matter of search and seizure, when, in truth and in fact, it exhorts and instructs federal prohibition agents to make raids and seizures, in cooperation with state officials, on warrants that are illegal under federal law, or without any warrents whatsoever.

The fourth amendment to the constitution guarantees every citizen immunity from unlawful, unreasonable and unjust searches and seizures. Congress early recognized and sought to preserve this fundamental right of the people. The federal statute reads in part:

"A search warrant cannot be issued except upon probable cause supported by affidavit, naming and describing the person and particularly describing the property and place to be searched."

In addition to this, even the Volstead act, Section 25, provides that no warrant may be issued for searching any home or dwelling house except upon proof of sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes.

Temperance—1931

BUFFALO, N. Y
TIMES

DEC 31 1930

Negroes and Aliens

ALTHOUGH we have written a number of critical pieces about him, we still retain a rather warm spot in our heart for Clarence True Wilson.

Mr. Wilson, at least, has not given us up. He still hopes to convert us to prohibition. The Anti-Saloon league and the W.C.T.U. apparently have abandoned their efforts. We almost never hear from them any more. But Mr. Wilson, who is something or other of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals, still sends us with religious regularity the "clip-sheet" of his board. Anything Mr. Wilson might do would, of course, be done religiously.

The idea of the "clip-sheet" is to save us trouble in getting out the paper. Any time we haven't enough news to fill the paper (though we never yet have been in quite that fix) we could take a pair of scissors and a pot of paste, clip from the clip-sheet and send the material to the composing room. Mr. Wilson even writes the headlines for us. We could just present this material as our own and not drag Mr. Wilson into it at all.

"Stop Alien Representation" is such a headline. The matter under the caption is what we would call opinion and not news. The position taken is that unnaturalized aliens should not be counted in the reapportionment of Congressional districts.

Mr. Wilson sees that the country has become more than 50 per cent urban. If the cities get the representation in Congress to which they are entitled under the constitution, there will be more wet congressmen from the cities hereafter than dry congressmen from the rural districts. Naturally he wants to postpone that evil day.

Mr. Wilson's proposal is to eliminate all the aliens from the population count in an effort to cut down the number of wet city congressmen.

"Americans ought to have some rights—some special rights, if you please—in America," says Mr. Wilson. "He (the American) sees a very real difference between a colored citizen and an alien who is not a citizen."

This is pretty obscure, because Mr. Wilson doesn't choose to explain just what he is hinting at. So we'll have to tell you what he means.

You see, the great bulk of prohibition support comes from the Southern states. In the South the colored brother isn't allowed to vote—despite the constitution—but he is counted in the population as entitled to representation.

So if we limited representation strictly to citizens who are allowed to vote, the Southern dry representation in Congress would be cut materially, almost cut in two in some states.

Mr. Wilson wouldn't like that. What he is driving at is an arrangement whereby we would count in the Southern Negro but count out the Northern city alien. Or, put in other words, he proposed to cut down the representation of city wets and leave inflated the representation of rural Southern drys.

Nothing could be more undemocratic, but what, after all, has the noble experiment to do with democracy?

WINSTON SALEM, N. C
JOURNAL

DEC 29 1930

Poison Alcohol Kills Four

Four Winston-Salem negroes die from drinking denatured alcohol, says local news item. It is against the law to drink liquor of any kind. And if there were no prohibitory law, the law of self-preservation and the promptings of common horse-sense should be enough to keep people from drinking the "stuff" that is trafficked under the guise of liquor.

But when it comes to furnishing words fittingly descriptive of the drinking of denatured alcohol, language is sadly deficient. To drink alcohol that is poisonous and is generally known to be so is nothing short of deliberate suicide. It is difficult indeed to imagine any human beings so devoid of elementary knowledge and primary caution as to drink a liquid that is patently a poison and advertised as such.

These four deaths resulting from the drinking of denatured alcohol should be a warning gruesome enough to deter others from utilizing this liquid to produce good cheer.

WETS FLAIL AWAY AGAINST DRY LAW

4-11-31

Meanwhile, Methodists Assail Anti-Prohibitionists

'DEMONSTRATION' PLANNED

WASHINGTON, April 5 (AP)—Two of the major wet organizations today launched fresh attacks against the dry law, while one of the leading dry groups assailed anti-prohibitionists and another rallied to the defense of the law.

The Methodist Episcopal board of temperance openly hit out at the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, charging that "it systematically incites the poorly informed to resentment" against the government.

The Association Against the prohibition Amendment countered with a statement on Norway's "noble experiment," contending that the failure of prohibition there presented a situation similar in many respects to that in the United States.

"Solid South Solid"

F. Scott McBride, superintendent of the Anti-Saloon league, who has just returned from a 5,000-mile trip through 10 Southern states, issued a statement to the effect that "the solid South is as solid as ever for prohibition."

From the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform came an announcement of a two-day "demonstration" against the dry law in Washington April 14 and 15 and a statement that since women were credited with having adopted prohibition, the feminine vote now would be organized for its repeal.

Mrs. Charles H. Sabin, chairman of the women's organization, said she expected 600 women from 36 states would attend and aid formation of plans to organize votes for anti-prohibition candidates in 1932.

Mrs. Sabin said she was "confident that the vast majority of women in this country have had enough of prohibition and are now ready to "say it with ballots."

Attacks on Expenditures

The Methodist board based its attack upon the financial statement of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment for January and February, declaring the reported expenditures of $103,281 to be "astonishing and significant."

"It is financed," the board said, "by a few millionaires —residing in four states, which are dominated by great cities having lare segregated colonies of bewildered immigrants, cities notorious throughout the world for corruption in the administration of municipal affairs."

McBride said "there is no noticeable sentiment for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment or modification of enforcement laws in the Southern states." He added, however, that "the people down there resent what they consider to be an effort to attach the Democratic party to the wet organizations."

SEN. ROBERTS CASTS DECIDING VOTE IN ILL. DRY LAW REPEAL BILL

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., April 1.—Much credit for the passage of the bill for repeal of the Illinois prohibition law after a six year fight, is being given to Senator Adelbert H. Roberts, of the Second Senatorial district, who cast the deciding vote in the upper house last week, bring victory for the wets by a vote of 26 to 24.

The fight for the repeal of the state dry law has been a long and hard one, and every effort was made to defeat the measure, despite the fact that the voters of the state have declared themselves opposed o the laws. Senator Roberts rose at the dramatic moment when it appeared that the measure might be lost. He is known to be himself an adherent of strict enforcement, but in a brief burst of eloquence declared: "Much as it pains me to do so, I vote "aye" on this measure to carry out the mandate of the people of my district. Mr. Clerk, I ask that you give an individualistic twist to the mark behind my name, to show that the vote is that of my constituency, not mine." The measure must be signed by Gov. Emmerson before it becomes effective, but it is generally believed that the governor will give it his O. K.

NEWS
CHARLESTON, S. C

APR 1 - 1931

The White Man's Problem

Again The News and Courier declares that in South Carolina "liquor" is a white man's problem. The moonshiners are not negroes. Most of the bootleggers are white men. Prohibition could be easily enforced if all or most of the violators were negroes, and everybody knows it.

BISHOP JONES JOINS LEGION IN WET MOVE

Chicago American

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Bishop E. W. D. Jones of the A.M.E. Z. Church, declared this week that he was opposed to prohibition and favored a referendum on the 18th Amendment for which the American Legion has declared. 10-3-31

"You cannot legislate morals. The prohibition law was put on the statutes by the Ku Klux Klan of the South, who have always violated all laws, including the 14th and 15th amendments. Prohibition has brought about rule by the Anti-Saloon League and Ku Klux of the South."

This was the theme of his address to the Kentucky Annual Conference which convened at Broadway Temple A.M.E.Z. Church, September 30th.

Educational Aspects Of National Prohibition

By KELLY MILLER

THE Intercollegiate Prohibition Association, with headquarters in the Driscol Hotel, Washington, has issued a bulletin entitled "Negro Student Promoters." This association has engaged the services of W. A. C. Hughes, Jr., son of Dr. W. A. C. Hughes, in charge of the home missionary work among Negroes for the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Hughes is a recent graduate of Lincoln University and of the Boston Law School. He has been assigned the task of organizing educational work among the college Negro youth.

Kelly Miller.

The results of this systematic educational program show that Negro teachers and students are intensely interested in the question of prohibition, in its moral, legal and educaticnal aspects. Already Mr. Hughes has brought the question to the attention of over 1',000 teachers and students in Southern colleges, with an appreciative and enthusiastic response.

All deep students of the liquor evil are thoroughly convinced that prohibition by mere legal fiat will be ineffective unless backed up by intellectual enlightenment and moral sanction. No law, in a democracy, can be effectively enforced unless it squares with the intelligence and moral enlightenment of the people who must obey it. If the popular intelligence and moral enlightenment fall below the standard of the well-intended law, then the intellect and conscience must be brought up to the higher standard through the process of education and moral awakening.

Political action will be effectless unless it be reinforced by popular intelligence and enlightened public sentiment. The great temperance agencies of the country are addressing themselves among white people to this wise and sensible method of procedure.

The Rev. Dr. Howard of Sumter, S. C., has been engaged by the Methodist Episcopal Church to promulgate temperance principles among Negroes of the South. He has confined his work mainly to securing individuals to sign the temperance pledge, as we were wont to do in the good old days of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Dr. Howard reports over 600,000 Negroes at his instance have signed the pledge not to use intoxicating liquors as a beverage. This is a result of tremendous moral value.

It is needless to discuss the ease with which one may secure signatures of a part of a weak-willed group to any high moral principle and the equal ease with which the signers are wont to lapse from their pledge. After we have made all reasonable allowance for lapses, it is still gratifying to know that so many have openly registered their good intention. After all that might be said about this hell-pavement material, yet such pledges often form a permanent foundation of principle upon which the pledges will stand unwaveringly.

So far as I know, these two individuals, both on the payroll and under direction of these temperance foundations, are the only Negroes who are seriously devoted to the educational temperance work among 12,000,000 members of this race. These great temperance organizations are exclusively under support and direction of white promoters and propagandists, who handle the Negro contingent with the little finger of the left hand. They do not seem to me to sense the deep moral significance of the black man's involvement in this great moral iniquity. He seems to be looked upon as apart from, but not a part of, the integral cause of moral reform. Although this left-handed effort is wofully inadequate to the enormity of the task, yet let it be hoped that it is serious and earnest of the bigger and better things yet to follow.

This leads me to repeat the oft-reiterated suggestion that the Negro race, through its educational, moral and religious leaders, shows a lamentable lack of interest and enthusiasm in this great moral reform. I do not know of any adequate or serious endeavor on part of Negro leadership to give effective expression in behalf of this moral prohibition or temperance.

Negro newspapers, almost without exception, are lukewarm, indifferent or openly unfriendly to the prohibition provision as it is imbedded in the organic structure of the law. Our religious organizations show only perfunctory devotion, with little serious earnestness, in the defense and support of the Eighteenth amendment, or of its underlying purpose. Whenever the issue is broached, there is always proposed an apologetic offset. Violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments are brought forward in palliation for moral indifference at the fate of the Eighteenth amendment.

The unrebuked violation of one provision of the Constitution is alleged in justification for moral aloofness respecting the espousal of another. And here the Negro race stands between unrelated amendments. It is left to white agencies and organizations to take the aggressive in inculcating temperance principles among the Negro peoples. To my mind this is a moral shame, a reproach which I dare hope will be speedily removed.

PASSAIC, N. J.
HERALD

AUG 27 1931

$40,000,000—FOR WHAT?

WOMEN and children are in want in many sections of this country and still the Government of the United States levies on its people a tax of $40,000,000 a year to "enforce" prohibition..

Forty millions wasted on an unenforceable law, at a time of general depression, when the same sum could be added to the credit side of the national ledger if Federal taxes were being collected at the source on beer, wines and liquor. Prohibition has become a rather expensive luxury, as well as a dismal failure.

Those forty million dollars represent two-thirds of the total expenditure of the Government for Federal law enforcement. Whatever sum is appropriated for the maintenance of the Secret Service, to run down and catch counterfeiters of currency, is money well spent. The Secret Service gets its men and they go to Atlanta to serve their time. And the law against counterfeiting is a popular law. The Prohibition Unit fusses around, making spectacular raids now and then, but the flow of liquor and beer that it dams up is only a drop in the bucket. That 10,000-gallon-a-day still which was raided in Clifton yesterday had been operating for at least two years, and it is but one of many. That's a $40,000 a day output! Instead of the Government collecting taxes on every gallon, corrupt prohibition agents take the "tax" to maintain their Cunninghams and Packards and Cadillacs at the shore, the while they ride to and from "work" in Fords and Chevys. There are some honest agents, but the percentage is small.

The repeal of prohibition is an issue not to be confused with the reform of the drunkard. We had drunks before prohibition and we have them today. Temperance was making progress in this country until week-kneed and jelly-spined legislators bowed before the whiplash of the Anti-Saloon League to vote approval of the 18th Amendment in the various Legislatures. Southerners, who want to keep liquor out of the reach of the Negro, and westerners, who are content with prohibition, so long as they have their farm-made applejack and elderberry wine, are helping to perpetuate this national folly, this corruption, this hypocrisy.

We are taxing ourselves forty million dollars a year—and for what? We could put that much money into the National Treasury by taxing good beer and potable liquor, instead of letting the crooked agents and the crooked politicians "tax" the makers of "green" beer and "moonshine" whiskey as they do today.

In every period of depression through which we have passed, recovery has started when a new "boom" industry has come into being. There is no new industry in sight now. The manufacture of beer, legally, would put enough men to work to make an appreciable improvement. A great number of other industries, as well as the grain-raising farmers, would feel the upward thrust.

One further instance of the hypocrisy of it all: Mabel Walker Willebrant, who as Assistant Attorney-General of the United States started out as the inveterate foe of all bootleggers, quit and took a job as counsel for the California wine grape growers. The doughty Mabel persuaded the Federal Farm Board to lend some twenty millions of Government money to the grape growers, so that they could market fermentable, barrelled grape juice and these new "wine bricks" all over the country. Of course one mustn't add water to the "wine bricks" and one mustn't let the grape juice barrels ferment in Nature's way!

As Cyril Maude used to say, when that celebrated English actor visited us a few years ago, "Aren't we all?"

But are we content to be a Nation of hypocrites?